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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 9, 2004

SAN ANTONIO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT DESIGNATED PORT OF ENTRY FOR GENERAL AVIATION CUSTOMS PROCESSING

San Antonio International Airport has been designated a United States Port of Entry thanks to legislation recently signed into law by U.S. President George W. Bush on December 3, 2004. The Conference Report for H.R. 1047, the Miscellaneous Trade and Technical Corrections Act of 2004, passed the House on October 8, 2004. On November 19, 2004, the Senate passed the report by unanimous consent. The House and Senate's approval of this Act contains a four-year extension of the designation that expired in 2002. The latest Act designates San Antonio International (SAT) as a landing site for arrival and U.S. Customs processing of private aircraft coming into the United States from foreign areas. This means general aviation aircraft operators no longer must stop in Laredo or Brownsville to clear Customs, if San Antonio is their final destination. The port of entry designation will expire in November 2006.

San Antonio U.S. Customs' hours of operation are: 0800-2200. Any private aircraft pilot planning to land at San Antonio International must notify the San Antonio Customs office at (210) 821-6965 no later than **one hour** before the aircraft penetrates U.S. air space. Failure to do so could result in a penalty of up to \$5,000. In an effort to expedite customs clearance, the aircraft operator is encouraged to fax Customs Form 178 PAES (Private Aircraft Enforcement System) to the San Antonio Customs office prior to departing. The Customs fax # is: (210) 821-6968. If San Antonio is not the final destination, an Overflight Exemption must still be filed with the U.S. Customs office at least **15 days** prior to arrival for a one-time visit and at least **30 days** prior to arrival for a year-long exemption.

Upon arrival at San Antonio International Airport, pilots should taxi to Gate 1 at Terminal 1. If U.S. Customs personnel are not at the gate to meet the aircraft, call their office at (210) 821-6965.

According to Assistant to the Aviation Director, Barbara Prossen, the City is working with its San Antonio legislative delegation to obtain a permanent designation for U.S. Customs processing of general aviation aircraft at San Antonio International Airport.

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